

Message Text

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SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

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CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN

JCS WASHDC

USNMR SHAPE

USDOCOSOUTH

USDELMC NATO

S E C R E T ATHENS 4758

C O R R E C T E D COPY (PARA 5 LINE 17)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR GR

SUBJECT: HOMEPORING SUB-GROUP - SECOND MEETING

REFS: (A) ATHENS 4679; (B) ATHENS 4719

1. IN JUN 26 MEETING, THE GREEK SIDE STATED THAT THE TEXT OF PROPOSED NAVY TO NAVY TECHNICAL ARRANGEMENT COVERING FUTURE USE OF ELEFSIS PIER, WHICH US HAD PROVIDED JUN 25, WAS UNDER CONSIDERATION WITHIN FONOFF AND HELLENCI NAVY COMMAND AND THAT A VERY HIGH POLITICAL DECISION WAS EXPECTED JUN 27. MEANWHILE, GREEK REPS STOOD READY TO LISTEN TO ANY SUPPORTING RATIONALE US SIDE WISHED TO PRESENT, BUT INDICATED THEIR INSTRUCTIONS REMAINED UNCHANGED AND THEY LACKED AUTHORITY TO DISCUSS ANY FUTURE USN USE OF THE PIER.

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2. IN RESPONSE TO US REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION, GREEKS

STATED THAT "DEMILITARIZATION" OF ELEFSIS AREA DID NOT INDICATE SPECIFIC PLANS FOR COMMERCIAL USE OF THE PIER BUT THAT THEY ANTICIPATED LAND AREA WOULD REVERT TO CONTROL OF PORT OF ELEFSIS AUTHORITY AND PIER TO COMMERCIAL OWNER OR OTHERWISE AS DESIRED BY US NAVY. GREEKS RECOGNIZED THAT THE CEMENT DUST FALLOUT PROBLEM WAS MANAGEABLE BUT THAT HELLENIC NAVY (HN) COULD AVOID THE PROBLEM ENTIRELY BY AVOIDING USE OF ELEFSIS. THEY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE PROBLEM OF LIMITED EGRESS IN AN EMERGENCY APPLIED TO THE HN FACILITY AT SALAMIS AS WELL AS TO ELEFSIS. HOWEVER, THIS FACTOR DID NOT APPEAR TO CONCERN HN AND THEY ONCE MORE STATED THAT US SHIPS WOULD BE WELCOME AT SALAMIS WHENEVER SHIP VISITS WERE AGAIN PERMITTED. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE THEORETICAL POSSIBILITY OF MOVING THE PIER FROM ELEFSIS TO SALAMIS WAS RAISED, AND THE GREEK REPS HASTENED TO POINT OUT THAT THE LIMITATIONS OF THEIR INSTRUCTIONS PREVENTED THEM FROM ADDRESSING THIS BUT SUGGESTED THAT USN COULD POSITION MUSE BARGES AND CALIBRATION VANS AT SALAMIS FOR EVENTUAL USN USE DURING SHIP VISITS AND HN USE ON NON-INTERFERENCE BASIS.

3. US REPS STATED THAT COLD IRON CAPABILITY WAS CRITICAL TO FUTURE SHIP REPAIR VISITS AT ELEFSIS, AND WITHOUT THE PIER IT WAS UNLIKELY US WOULD RETAIN MUSE OR CALIBRATION CAPABILITY IN ATHENS. MOREOVER, WITHOUT EXISTING CAPABILITY, IT WOULD BE IMPRACTICAL TO HAVE DESTROYER TENDER CALL AT ATHENS TO SERVICE SIXTH FLEET DESTROYER-TYPE SHIPS AND, AS IN THE PAST, TO DO EXTENSIVE WORK FOR HN SHIPS. TERMINATION OF PIER USE WOULD ALSO RESULT IN DEGRADATION OF GREEK SHIPYARDS SPECIALIZED SKILL THROUGH LOSS OF USN WORK NOW BEING ACCOMPLISHED THERE.

4. IN SUMMARY, US REPS INDICATED THAT US PRIMARY DESIRE WAS FOR A FAVORABLE POLITICAL DECISION ON FUTURE USE OF THE PIER AT ELEFSIS. HOWEVER, IN THE EVENT OF A NEGATIVE DECISION THE US WOULD APPRECIATE SPECIFIC ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTIONS FROM GOG SO THAT US COULD EVALUATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH VISITING SIXTH FLEET UNITS IN THE ATHENS AREA MIGHT BE SUPPORTED.

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5. THE GREEK SIDE THEN RAISED THE QUESTION OF FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS ATTENDANT TO THE TERMINATION OF HOMEPORING. THEY REFLECTED "SURPRISE AND ASTONISHMENT" THAT THE USG APPEARED TO BE SEEKING TO TRANSFER TO GOG \$1.56 MILLION LIABILITY FOR LEASE TERMINATION PENALTIES. US REPS EXPLAINED IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL THE CONCEPT OF FORCE MAJEURE AS IT RELATED TO THE SPECIFIC TERMS OF THE LEASES AND JUSTIFICATION FOR US POSITION IN THE TERMS OF THE EXISTING

HOMEPORTING TECHNICAL ARRANGEMENT. THE POINT WAS MADE THAT US DID NOT WISH TO CANCEL LEASES AND WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO CONTINUE TO USE PIER AND RECREATIONAL AREA FOR FUTURE SHIP VISITS AND OF COURSE TO CONTINUE ALL LEASE OBLIGATIONS. HOWEVER, IF GOG DECIDED THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE, USG WOULD EXPECT GOG TO RELIEVE USG FROM LIABILITY UNDER THE TERMINATION PENALTY PROVISIONS OF THE LEASES. GREEK REPS INDICATED THAT GOG HELD A DIFFERING VIEWPOINT BUT WOULD STUDY US POSITION. ANTICIPATING A POLITICAL DECISION LATE JUN 27, THE GROUP AGREED TENTATIVELY TO MEET AGAIN JUN 28.

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